

## INFORMATION BULLETIN

October 23, 2018

### French Frigate Shoals Impacted by Hurricane Walaka

*Honolulu, Hawaii* – According to recent satellite images, there have been significant changes to French Frigate Shoals, part of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The images appear to show alterations to Tern Island, and East Island appears to be under water. French Frigate Shoals was in the direct path of Hurricane Walaka, in early October.

Both Tern and East Island are important nesting grounds for threatened green sea turtles and pupping grounds for endangered monk seals.

Over the weekend, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration staff were flown over the monument to photograph any impacts from the hurricane. These images are currently being analyzed.

A marine debris team is currently working in the Monument and will be stopping at French Frigate Shoals as part of a previously planned mission. While there, they will do a preliminary assessment of the damage and impacts to wildlife.

Monument co-managers are working to better understand the implications for cultural resources and wildlife, protected species and their habitat within the Monument. We will continue to monitor the species and islands to better assess the impacts from the hurricane. Based on the data, managers will determine next steps and management actions.

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*Papahānaumokuākea is cooperatively managed to ensure ecological integrity and achieve strong, long-term protection and perpetuation of Northwestern Hawaiian Island ecosystems, Native Hawaiian culture, and heritage resources for current and future generations. Four co-trustees - the Department of Commerce, Department of the Interior, State of Hawai'i and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs - protect this special place. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was inscribed as the first mixed (natural and cultural) UNESCO World Heritage Site in the United States in July 2010. For more information, please visit [www.papahanaumokuakea.gov](http://www.papahanaumokuakea.gov).*

